

Disaster Risk  
Reduction Network  
–Philippines

Building Disaster  
Resilient  
Communities  
Learning Circle

Coastal Core  
Sorsogon

COPE

Social Action Center  
Prelature of Infanta

Marinduque Council  
for Environmental  
Concerns

MAHAL

PhilNet-Visayas

Panay Rural  
Development  
Center , Inc.

FORGE

Social Action  
Ministry Prelature of  
Ipil, Zamboanga  
Sibugay

Manila Observatory

Buklod Tao

Center for Disaster  
Preparedness

Pampanga Disaster  
Response Network

Christian Aid

Oxfam Great  
Britain

Plan Philippines

## **Braving Insecurity May Be A Reflection of Coping and Resilience but is No Way to Live:**

### **A Call to Strengthen Vulnerability Reduction and Capacity Building Strategies for DRR in Asia**

Scientific assessments on climate-related risks for the Philippines are no longer of the future, rather, in the here and now. Just over the past year, warmer days and warmer nights, extreme heavy rainfall, flooding in both upland and lowland communities, rainfall-induced landslides, typhoon crossings in the least expected places like Mindanao and Palawan, storm surges that wrecked havoc in Philippine communities ----- causing death and destruction of hard-earned agricultural produce, infrastructure and properties.



Such has been the experience of many vulnerable communities in the Philippines and so, as we have frequently seen on television, other communities in Southeast, East and South Asia.

Sectors of the Philippine government, particularly the disaster agencies, have been proactive in terms of addressing disaster risks and we affirm them for that. Needs of vulnerable, especially the elderly, children, and those who have disabilities or are differently-abled , are being recognized.

Civil society organizations are ardent and persevering in addressing community-based disaster risks. Gaps are bridged by dialogue and partnerships between governmental, private and civil society organizations. But, times are tough and tougher measures have to be taken to address the challenges of disaster risks that now overwhelm us.

Having a stake in the commitment made by the Philippines in the Hyogo Framework for Action and respecting and upholding the commitments made in the Delhi Declaration and proposals presented in the draft Kuala Lumpur Declaration for the Third Ministerial Meeting on DRR on December 2-4, 2008:

1. We continue to affirm the efforts of the government to institutionalize disaster risk reduction in planning processes and programs.

However, we call on the Philippine and other Asian governments to make concrete investments on scientific assessments, grassroots education on DRR, establishment of functional early warning systems, gender-sensitive vulnerability reduction measures, accessibility of social insurance and financial mechanisms to communities most at risk, institutionalization of disaster preparedness measures and on innovations in addressing climate-related disaster risks and emerging hazards among others.

2. If indeed, there is sincerity in disaster risk reduction measures, then economic ventures (i.e. mining and rapid property development and waste production that accompany urbanization) and political decisions (i.e. declaration of war) that heighten risks of many communities will have to be seriously reflected upon to assess its appropriateness in the context of the HFA.
3. A harsh reality is before us: many communities, particularly in urban areas, are located in harm's way (i.e. flood plains, alluvial fans, mountain slopes). This cannot go on, otherwise, disaster risks will increase. Land-use planning sensitive to disaster-risks and resettlement plans, developed in consultation with the stakeholders and factor in livelihoods and essential services, have to be set in place to keep people out of harm's way.
4. Policy coherence in addressing climate change and disaster risk issues. The HFA and the corresponding Delhi Declaration have to find its place in the refinement of the Kyoto Protocol and subsequent agreements on CC in the pursuit of the UNFCCC. The agreements should reflect a balance between mitigation, climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction.
5. Civil society, people's organizations and community participation can help. Allow us to by ensuring the institutionalization of civil society participation in meeting disaster risk reduction and climate change mitigation and adaptation objectives.
6. Asian countries lie on the earth's pathways that are most affected by impacts of climate change. There is a need to come together to further understand the regional climate systems, develop innovations that will enable people and eco-systems to evade risks or face devastating risks to the least.

**We bravely face disaster risks but our lives can be better. We have the right to live in an environment and a right to a government that will guarantee our security and every right to development.**

**We draw on the sincerity, conviction, and commitment of our government and that of every Asian government to and our belief in partnerships and complementation for disaster risk reduction to make this happen.**